



RIGHT...

I KNOW  
THIS  
ROAD



HEY  
WHERE  
ARE YOU  
GOING?

YOU GUYS  
THIRSTY?

CHABANAIS  
IS JUST OVER  
THERE.

This  
was a very  
famous brothel,  
a Maison  
Close. Every-  
one in Paris  
knew it.

WANT A  
DRINK?

IT'S  
ON ME.





A palace of pleasure and desire

COME  
ON IN!

HEY!!

HOW OFTEN  
CAN HE  
AFFORD A  
PLACE LIKE  
THAT?

WAIT,  
BROTHER.  
IT'S  
COLD OUT.

DON'T  
WORRY  
ABOUT  
LEON. LET  
HIM WAIT.

HE  
KEPT YOU  
WAITING  
LONG  
ENOUGH.

Enter the Maison Close

# Welcome





GET THAT  
MUD OFF  
YOUR FEET,  
AT LEAST.

I'm  
clean  
for a  
few  
miles.

I CAN'T  
LET YOU IN  
LIKE THIS,  
NOT EVEN  
YOU.

AND  
THOSE  
THINGS  
WITH  
YOU...

YOU  
LOOK A  
FRIGHT!



GOOD  
BYE-  
NING.

...



It was  
the mood  
that first  
infatuated me,  
turned me into  
a regular.

They're  
picky about  
their dress code,  
but once inside,  
the mood is  
relaxed.





IT'S THE  
SAME  
EVERY  
TIME

WHAT?

HOW FAST  
YOU GROW  
INURED TO  
SUCH  
LUXURY!

I AM.

SAKAE,  
YOU LOOK  
BORER

SING,  
LAUGH,  
AND MAKE  
MERRY



THERE'S NO  
DARKNESS.



SUGIURA-SAN'S  
WORK CONSISTS  
ALMOST ENTIRELY  
OF WHAT CAN ONLY  
BE TAKEN AS  
WOULD-BE ART  
CRAFTED BY A  
FRAUDULENT  
HACK.

IF ONE CAN  
PENETRATE HIS  
HABITUAL OVERUSE  
OF VULGAR  
ENIGMATIC DEVICES,  
ONE FINDS THE  
ESSENTIAL  
DARKNESS BENEATH  
HAS NOT BEEN  
DEPICTED  
AT ALL.

That was  
exactly the  
criticism  
directed at  
my own work.



I SEE...

I've been  
trying to  
compensate  
for that  
truth.

Ever  
since...

IT IS  
TEMPTING TO  
BLAME THIS  
ON A FAUCITY  
OF ARTISTIC  
DISPOSITION...  
SAGAKI, EVER  
SINCE...

BUT THE  
TRUTH IS, IT  
IS MERELY A  
BYPRODUCT OF  
HIS ARTISTIC  
ROMANTICISM,  
BORROWING  
FORM ALONE  
FROM THAT  
WHICH THE  
AUTHOR  
ADMIRES

OR  
DECEIV IT AS  
PROOF OF THE  
DANGERS OF  
THE RECENT  
TREND TOWARDS  
HEDONISTIC LI-  
TERATURE.



No  
darkness.



But in time I  
understood.

I have no  
darkness.

That  
was  
why I  
sought  
it out.



THAT  
WOMAN  
IS PURE  
HELL!



HER  
NIGHT MARISH  
TRUE NATURE!  
SHE IS THE  
EMBODIMENT OF  
ORDED LEECHING  
EVERY COIN SHE  
CAN FROM A  
MAN.

SHE'S  
BEAUTIFUL  
LIKE A FLOWER,  
SOFT LIKE  
INSECT  
WINGS...

HER VOICE  
LIKE THE  
HARPS OF  
HEAVEN,  
SWEET AND  
KIND...

LEARN... YOU... THEN...



AND MEN  
FALL INTO  
HER TRAP OF  
THEIR OWN  
VOLITION.

BEFORE YOU  
KNOW IT SHE'S  
TAKEN THE SHIRT  
OFF YOUR BACK  
AND ORDERED  
YOU TO SELL IT  
FOR HER.

WANNA  
MEET  
HER?







That...  
was  
Nana.





YOU  
SMELL....



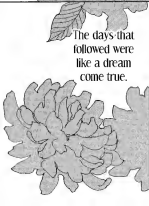
Wow...

Women  
would be  
repulsed by  
me, or  
pretend I  
wasn't there.

Honestly,  
I was often  
the victim of  
racism.

But  
when I met  
Nana, she  
said...





The days that  
followed were  
like a dream  
come true.



That night,  
I wrote her  
words in my  
notebook.



Before  
I knew it,  
I was  
dancing  
on the  
palm  
of her  
hand.





Every day cost a staggering amount.



SAKAE-SAN,  
DEAR LORD!



I SHOULD NEVER HAVE INTRODUCED YOU TO THAT WOMAN!

HALF A YEAR OF FUNDS FROM HOME... THEY'RE GONE!

WHAT'S WRONG, FUNIARI?



JUST HAVE THEM SEND MORE.

SO WHAT?



I'LL LET NANA KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, PUT THINGS ON HOLD.

ANY-  
WAY...

THEN GET THE OTHER JAPANESE HERE TO HELP US OUT.

ARE YOU MAD? THAT'LL TAKE AT LEAST A FORTNIGHT.



HMM?



SO,  
UM...

I WON'T  
BE ABLE  
TO COME BY  
FOR THE  
NEXT FEW  
MONTHS...  
WEEKS.

I'd never  
seen that  
look  
before.



Eh?



I had  
forgot-  
ten.

BE THE  
SAKAS I  
LOVE AGAIN  
SOON,  
PLEASE.



WELL...

WHAT A  
SHAME.

She was  
the most  
evil  
woman  
alive.

SHE WON'T  
SEE ME AT  
ALL? JUST  
BECAUSE I'M  
TEMPORARILY  
OUT OF  
FUNDS?

DAMN  
IT.

HOW RUDE!  
AFTER ALL I  
SPENT ON  
HER!







There was  
no one  
like that  
pure hell.

I went to  
filthy dives,  
perfectly  
decent ones,  
and the  
highest-class  
places.





LOOKING FOR  
SOMEONE?

Her voice  
was husky.



RIGHT?

ONLY SHE  
WILL DO.

YOU WON'T  
FIND HER  
ANYWHERE.



...

I WAS  
BUT I  
COULDN'T  
FIND HER

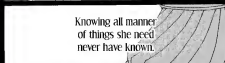


Wreathed  
in a haze  
of sadness  
and  
glamour...



Worn  
out.

Mauled  
beneath  
men for  
years...



Knowing all manner  
of things she need  
never have known.



ONLY...





RIGHT,  
COLETTE...

AH HA  
HA



I WAS SO  
CRUEL TO  
YOU.

I REACTED  
EMOTIONALLY,  
SAID THAT  
WHICH I  
NORMALLY  
WOULD LEAVE  
UNSAID.



I DIDN'T  
EXPECT YOU  
TO STRIKE  
SO NEAR MY  
HEART.



FOR THE FIRST  
WRITING YOU'D  
EVER DONE, IT  
HIT HOME.

I COULD  
FEEL IT  
WORMING  
ITS WAY  
INSIDE ME.



Why did I  
say that  
to you?



"That  
woman  
is pure  
hell!"



...is a  
woman who  
mirrors  
your true  
self.

Perhaps  
what that  
really  
describes...

